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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 2003

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES  
BRIEFING  
EDITORIAL OPINION

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#### HEADLINES

##### MASS APPEAL

Springtime again in Turkey, U.S. relations - Turkiye  
Bush vows support for Cyprus, Erdogan for Israel - Sabah  
EU sanctions on TRNC to be removed - Hurriyet  
Athens, Ankara cooperation to lift sanctions on TRNC - Aksam  
Verheugen: 2007 not likely for Turkey's EU accession - Vatan  
Videotape shows execution with bomb in Saddam's Iraq - Milliyet

##### OPINION MAKERS

U.S. issues warm messages for Turkey - Radikal  
U.S. has warned Saudis beforehand - Radikal  
Rumsfeld: Al-Qaida in Iran - Cumhuriyet  
Shiites rally against U.S. in Baghdad - Yeni Safak  
Mass grave of thousands of Kurds near Baghdad - Cumhuriyet  
U.S.: PKK terror not our priority - Cumhuriyet  
Israel unhappy with Mideast roadmap - Zaman  
Putin considers amnesty for Chechen fighters - Zaman  
Parliament of Europe to increase financial aid to Turkey's  
Human Rights Assoc. - Zaman  
Greek tourists to Turkey increase by 42 percent - Cumhuriyet

##### FINANCIAL JOURNALS

TOBB: Turkish Trade Center in Washington this year -  
Finansal Forum  
Turkey insists on QIZ with U.S. - Dunya

#### BRIEFING

U.S. -Turkey ties warming: Dailies believe strain between U.S. and Turkey to be gradually reduced, particularly after the 'warm' exchange of messages between President Bush and Prime Minister Erdogan. The Turkish leader called the President the other day to offer condolences for the Riyadh bombings. According to all papers Bush said that the U.S. would cooperate with Turkey in Iraq's rebuilding and asked for support for the Mideast road map, while Erdogan, agreeing, vowed to send Foreign Minister Gul to Israel. The rapprochement was further strengthened when National Security Advisor Rice stressed the strategic alliance between the two countries, reports note. U.S. officials bear in mind Turkey's concern over the security situation in Northern Iraq, and vowed to eliminate the terrorist threat in the region. Nevertheless, papers report that the U.S. has told Ankara that the struggle against PKK/KADEK terror was not among immediate American priorities. Meanwhile, "Yeni Safak" reports Deputy SecDefense Wolfowitz would pay a 'make up' visit to Turkish peacekeeping troops during his trip to Bosnia Herzegovina on Friday. Deputy Treasury Secretary John Taylor: Most dailies and TV news report that Deputy Secretary of Treasury Taylor said that negotiation over the \$1 billion grant for Turkey will be discussed immediately after the conclusion of the 5th IMF review. Taylor noted Turkey's situation would be taken up at the upcoming G-8 finance ministers' meeting in France. Taylor is reported to have said that Iraq's reconstruction process will create job opportunities for Turkish companies,.

Minister Babacan to Bilderberg meetings: "Hurriyet" reports State Minister for economy, Ali Babacan would attend the Bilderberg meetings in Paris on Friday. The paper reminds

readers that Islamists have always fired strong criticism at political figures such as ANAP's former leader Mesut Yilmaz and social democrat Erdal Inonu participating at the 'summit of Zionists.' Paul Wolfowitz will be the 'surprise' guest at the meetings, according to Hurriyet. Meanwhile, the ruling AKP deputies and cabinet members will gather at a resort in Antalya on Friday for a three-day consultation process before the party congress in August, papers report. Commentators point to growing disagreement among the members of AKP, which they regard as a 'patchwork' instead of a disciplined political party. On the other hand, papers report Foreign Minister Gul as saying that AKP would apply for membership to the Christian Democrat Party's wing of the Parliament of Europe (ironic for an "Islamist" party).

Edelman - U.S. envoy to Ankara: A "Sabah" editorial says Eric Edelman, advisor to Dick Cheney, and an expert on the Middle East and Russia, will be assigned as U.S. Ambassador to Ankara later this summer. Edelman is among the 'Preventive War' theoreticians like Wolfowitz and Khalilzad. The article opines that Washington is sending a 'hawk' to Ankara to contribute to the restructuring of the Middle East.

#### EDITORIAL OPINION

- a) Aftermath of Riyadh Bombings
- b) Turkish-Kurdish Issues

#### "Return of Al Qaida"

Erdal Guven commented in liberal-intellectual Radikal (5/16): "Despite all the indications and speculations about 'Al Qaida is finished', the recent Riyadh bombings seems to prove what American expert Peter Bergen was saying. Bergen, a known Al Qaida expert believes that the organization is more of an ideology than a network. . Al Qaida is not only targeting the US, but also the pro-American regimes in the region. Thus it comes as no surprise that Saudi Arabia becomes a frequent target. . There is a lesson to learn from the Riyadh bombings. Al Qaida, as an ideology, is not going to be flexible in negotiation, for making concessions or reconciliation. Yet the antidote for Al Qaida will come through the rapid implementation of political, economic and social reforms in all of the Arab regimes, particularly the Saudi regime. Otherwise the termination of Al Qaida will remain an impossible goal. . In the meantime, the big picture, i.e. Palestine-Israel issue, must not be ignored. If the issue remains unsettled, we will see the return of Al Qaida many times."

#### "Cold war in northern Iraq"

Zeynep Gurcanli noted in tabloid Star (5/16): "Washington stated the need for humanitarian aid in Iraq and invited Turkish NGOs to become involved. Ankara welcomed this message and began working for cooperation with the US. However, the Kurdish groups in northern Iraq are very much occupied in finding ways of getting Turkey out of the area. The Kurdish Parliament in the area recently adopted a decision to call for the dissolution of the 'Peace Monitoring Force' which protected Kurdish groups since 1996. . This group was initiated by Turkey and kept 800 Turkish soldiers on duty. Assyrians and Turkomans also served in this group. It remains to be seen what would be Washington's reaction to this unanimous decision by the Kurdish parliament. At the moment, Ankara is asking Washington for the continuation of the mission, while the Kurdish groups are pressuring for the dissolution. It seems the 'cold war' in northern Iraq is to continue, at least for the foreseeable future."

PEARSON